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1<sup>st</sup> February 2010

Dear Colleague

***NHS Car Park Parking: Consultation on Improving Access for Patients***

On 29<sup>th</sup> December 2009, the Secretary of State for Health launched a consultation on NHS Car Parking, consulting on improving access for patients. A copy of the consultation document and the initial impact assessment is available from the DH website via this link:

[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH\\_110557](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_110557)

We have been requested by the Secretary of State for Health to hear and gather a range of views of the understanding and acceptance of car parking charges within the NHS. These views will assist in developing a more consistent and fairer approach to car parking charges within the NHS that will be understood and accepted by patients and public everywhere. It is hoped to see car-parking charges for in-patients phased out over the next three years, as savings from back-office costs allow. The Department of Health want to hear what people, both public and staff, think about this, as well as other ideas about how to make things fairer for outpatients too.

The Secretary of State for health has acknowledged that others may say that car parking should not be a priority when the NHS faces such a considerable productivity and quality challenge. These are the choices he wants to bring out in this consultation as we decide together on the next steps.

The charge for parking at NHS car parks is a highly emotive and significant issue for all patients, family, friends and staff across the whole of Kent, Surrey and Sussex, therefore suggesting that the response to this consultation will be good. I hope you will take part and help us improve the patient and staff experience across the NHS.

The Department has requested all regional reports to be sent back to the national NHS Car Parking Consultation Team by 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2010. We would therefore appreciate it if you could send your contribution by the 16th February 2010.

To make this easier we have set up an online form which takes only 10 minutes to complete: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2NX7Q75>

Alternatively please write to us or send us an email: [consultation@southeastcoast.nhs.uk](mailto:consultation@southeastcoast.nhs.uk) we would be delighted to know your views.

We intend to offer support in terms of producing a syndicated article to use in your communication channels to raise awareness with staff and stakeholders, an online survey to easily signpost to the public; we will also be doing some regional work to capture on film the views of the public, patients and staff.

I am writing to all of our stakeholders: NHS staff, LINKs HOSCs, clinical networks, Local Authorities, MPs and key voluntary sector organisations, and I would appreciate your assistance if you could cascade this information through your organisation to any interested local community members so they too could contribute.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Candy Morris". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Candy" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Morris".

**Candy Morris**  
Chief Executive  
NHS South East Coast